

TOWN OF MANSFIELD/DEPARTMENT OF CORRECTION  
PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE  
WEDNESDAY, July 18, 2007  
*Bergin Correctional Institute*

Minutes

Members Present: A. Barberet, G. Cole, E. Higgins, C. Paulhus, W. Stauder (Chair), S. Thomas

Members Absent: R. Blicher , R. Gergler, R. Pellegrine, V. Stearns, C. Lary, W. Solenski

Staff: Maria Capriola (Town of Mansfield), Officer Jerry Marchon (Town of Mansfield Police), Captain Chris Corey (DOC), Counselor Supervisor Bill Corey (DOC), Counselor Supervisor Joseph Roach (DOC), Deputy Warden Neal Kearney (DOC), and Deputy Warden James Foley (DOC).

I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting came to order at 1:10 p.m. Warden Higgins introduced a number of her staff members to the Committee.

II. MINUTES

1. April 18, 2007 Meeting Minutes –Mr. Paulhus made a motion, approve the minutes of April 18, 2007. The motion passed unanimously.

III. COMMUNICATIONS

1. May 16, 2007 List of Offenses at DBCI – No discussion from the Committee.
2. June 14, 2007 List of Offenses at DBCI – Warden Higgins distributed an updated list of offenses dated July 17, 2007. Ms. Barberet inquired as to whether or not an assault on a victim over the age of 60 is an automatic 1<sup>st</sup> degree assault charge. Warden Higgins clarified that the particular crime noted is not an automatic 1<sup>st</sup> degree assault charge. Ms. Thomas asked staff to walk the Committee through the list. Staff clarified that the offenses listed are the original offenses of the inmates.

IV. WARDEN'S REPORT AND DISCUSSION

1. Population Status Report – Ms. Higgins reported that the overflow population was currently equivalent to an additional 120 inmates (above the normal capacity of 962). She noted that an expansion is currently underway at the Carl Robinson facility, which will create space for an additional 500 level 2 beds. The expansion should alleviate Bergin's overflow population some time during the fall. Warden Higgins reported that the inmates and staff are functioning well; Ms. Thomas inquired about inmate meal time and staffing. Warden Higgins stated that inmates are not required to attend meals (3 per day, plus snack via the commissary), but most do choose to attend. Warden Higgins noted that staff has been using overtime shifts to accommodate extra work associated with the inmate overflow population. Mr. Cole noted that a recent newspaper article cited an overtime cost per correction officer in California at \$25,000 per year.
2. List of Offenses – No further discussion outside of agenda item III (2).

#### V. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

The Chairman did not have a report for this meeting.

#### VI. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK

There was no one from the public who wished to address the committee at this meeting.

#### VII. OLD BUSINESS

1. Consolidation of Public Safety and Correctional Facility Liaison Committees – Ms. Capriola provided an overview of the relevant statute (CGS, Chapter 325, Sec. 18-81h(a)) as requested at the April 18, 2007 meeting. Ms. Thomas said that as long as items such as education, programming, recreation, volunteer activities, and addiction services were a standing agenda item for the Public Safety Committee, then the two committees should merge. The Committee as a whole was in agreement with Ms. Thomas's statement. Mr. Paulhus motioned, seconded by Chairwoman Stauder to approve the following motion, "Move to recommend to the Mansfield Town Council that the Correctional Facility Liaison Committee be consolidated with the Public Safety Committee effective September 1, 2007." The motion passed unanimously in a 6-0-0 vote. Ms. Capriola stated that she will prepare the

recommendation and submit it to Town Council for their review at the Council's regularly scheduled meeting on July 23, 2007.

2. Security Measures, Installation of 2<sup>nd</sup> Layer of Security Razor Wire – Warden Higgins stated that the Department would like to install a second layer of security razor wire along the top of the perimeter of the fence. She stated that the wire would be an effective means to deter people from escaping. Mr. Cole asked whether the wire would have a tight or loose configuration. Warden Higgins said the wire would be a single roll of loose wire. She further noted that although the state had received approval to install two layers of wire along the ground, it has only installed one layer. Mr. Cole asked and the Warden confirmed that there have been no escapees at Bergin since the installation of the razor wire along the ground. Warden Higgins noted that since Bergin is a level 2, with inmates shortly returning to society, the Facility tries to teach responsibility. As a result, there is both frequent individual and small group movement on the compound. She noted that it can be tempting for inmates to try and escape, particularly if there are family problems and issues at home. She also stated that Bergin has been housing many youth inmates from MYI (Manson Youth Institution); these inmates can be impulsive and the temptation to escape can be great. Inmates from MYI who arrive at Bergin are used to a restrictive environment, so the “freedom” of movement at Bergin can be tempting.

Ms. Thomas stated that UCONN parents and students have objected to installation of razor wire at the Facility in the past. Warden Higgins and the Deputy Wardens stated that the students would have increased safety if the installation occurs; the installation would limit the opportunity for escape. Both Chairwoman Stauder and Mr. Paulhus noted that UCONN has been and will likely continue to develop Depot Campus, which is across the street from the Facility. Mr. Paulhus noted that as the Depot Campus activity increases, there will be greater temptation for inmates to escape since more cars would be available. Mr. Paulhus stated that he is in support of the installation as a public safety measure.

Warden Higgins distributed PA-85, which was the proposal for installation of the razor wire. She discussed the specifications and cost (\$89,000) of the project. She also noted, that if requested, they can plant more trees or shrubbery along the fence.

Mr. Paulhus motioned, seconded by Mr. Cole to approve the following motion, “Move, effective July 18, 2007, to recommend to

the Mansfield Town Council that the Council accept the Connecticut Department of Correction's proposal to install at Bergin Correctional Institute one roll of security razor wire around the top edge of the perimeter security fence. This would also include a management fence 4 feet high, permanent around the baseball field." The motion passed unanimously in a 6-0-0 vote. Ms. Capriola stated that she will prepare the recommendation and submit it to Town Council for their review at the Council's regularly scheduled meeting on July 23, 2007.

#### VIII. NEW BUSINESS

There was no new business to discuss.

#### IX. ADJOURNMENT

Chairwoman Stauder made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mr. Paulhus. The meeting adjourned at 1:56 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Capriola  
Assistant to Town Manager

# TOWN OF MANSFIELD CORRECTIONAL FACILITY LIAISON COMMITTEE

July 18, 2007

## Minutes

Members and Staff Present: Same as DOC Public Safety Committee.

### I. CALL TO ORDER

The meeting came to order at 1:56 p.m.

### II. MINUTES

1. April 18, 2007 Meeting Minutes – Mr. Paulhus made a motion to adopt the minutes, seconded by Ms. Barberet. The motion to adopt the minutes passed unanimously.

### III. COMMUNICATIONS – None

### IV. WARDEN'S REPORT AND DISCUSSION

Community Outreach and Programming Updates –Warden Higgins provided the following updates:

- Inmates have participated in a variety of community service /outreach projects recently such as park improvements in Sprague and bleacher renovations at Newington High School.
- The Greenhouse foundation is in and the basketball courts are nearing completion. Some outdoor universal equipment has been installed and has proven to be very popular with the inmates.
- Several updates are occurring at the facility including fresh paint in all of the rooms, upgrading generators, and installing fire doors in the Marvin-Bennett building.
- Addiction services is operating well and the Warden will invite the Committee to attend a future graduation ceremony.
- Bergin is now the top facility in the State for inmates acquiring GEDs.
- The transitional teacher has arrived. The program counselor has been promoted so a vacancy in the position currently exists. All areas have staff dedicated to re-entry.
- Bergin recently received a donation of 100 books for its Library.

Ms. Thomas pointed to a recent article in the Hartford Courant that discussed the role of Chaplains and Muslims. Warden Higgins stated that Bergin offers Muslim, Protestant and Catholic services, bible studies, etc. Bergin has three Chaplains that are specifically dedicated to Bergin.

V. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO SPEAK

There was no one from the public who wished to address the committee at this meeting.

VI. OLD BUSINESS

1. Mr. Paulhus motioned, seconded by Chairwoman Stauder to approve the following motion, "Move to recommend to the Mansfield Town Council that the Correctional Facility Liaison Committee be consolidated with the Public Safety Committee effective September 1, 2007." The motion passed unanimously in a 6-0-0 vote. Ms. Capriola stated that she will prepare the recommendation and submit it to Town Council for their review at the Council's regularly scheduled meeting on July 23, 2007.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

1. The Committee toured the Classroom/School Facilities and expressed an interest in returning for another tour of other programs. The Committee discussed meeting at Bergin again for its October meeting. Warden Higgins welcomed the Committee to return for another tour/meeting.

ADJOURNMENT

The Committee adjourned at 4:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Maria Capriola  
Assistant to Town Manager